



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**NEW SET OF SCHOOL PREPAREDNESS TIPS FOR PARENTS**  
*This week's tips stress the importance of reading aloud to children.*

First Steps today released its sixth set of weekly school readiness tips for parents. The tips can also be found on the First Steps website at [www.scfirststeps.org/press.htm](http://www.scfirststeps.org/press.htm).

**Why You Should Read Aloud to Your Child**

Quite simply, reading aloud is the best way to ensure that your child will learn to read on his own and develop a love for reading and books. Reading accomplishes this - and much more.

Reading aloud instills an interest in books and learning. The more parents read to their children, the better readers their children will become. And like anything, the better you get at it, the more you like it. The more you like it, the more you do it. None of this occurs without an adult planting the seeds of interest, and this cannot be accomplished without reading aloud.

When you read aloud to your child, you are telling him that you value literacy. You are also telling him that you value spending time with him sharing a story, a Mother Goose rhyme, or a poem. Children crave quality time with their parents, and sharing a picture book is the perfect opportunity to do just that.

**Source:** Modified from "Why You Should Read Aloud to Your Child," Leslie Barban, Richland County Public

**10 Books to Read with Your Child**

**Ten, Nine Eight** – by Molly Bang

This bedtime counting book follows a young girl and her father through the ritual of going to bed. Soothing and lush illustrations accompany text.

**Madeline** – by Ludwig Bemelmans

This beloved story has been loved for generations. The rhymed, singsong text takes 12 little girls and their teacher Miss Clavel on many adventures, and introduces one of the most famous of all storybook characters.

**Goodnight Moon** – by Margaret Wise

This popular story encapsulates a small rabbit's bedtime ritual of saying goodnight to all of his friends in "the great green room." Charming illustrations are as memorable as the text.

**(more)**

**The Very Hungry Caterpillar** – by Eric Carle

Follow this hungry caterpillar as he eats everything from one apple to five oranges and finds himself still hungry. Colorful collage illustrations tell this simple tale of a caterpillar turning into a butterfly.

**Harold and the Purple Crayon** – by Crockett Johnson

Oh, what a simple crayon can draw when an imaginative little boy named Harold holds it in his hand one night as he draws himself a walk, a moon, a home, and finally his very own bed.

**The Snowy Day** – by Ezra Jack Keats

One morning Peter wakes up to see that “Snow had fallen during the night.” He excitedly runs outside to play in it, reveling in everything about the snow.

**Whose Mouse Are You?** – by Robert Kraus

With tender wit, Kraus brings us a young mouse grappling with one of childhood’s harsh experiences: a new sibling in the house. Every young child with a baby sister or brother will commiserate with this young mouse.

**A Hole is to Dig: A First Book of Definitions** – by Ruth Krauss

This book is filled with simply wonderful things over which to ponder. Maurice Sendak’s small line drawings capture the wistful nature of the children pictured, and all the discoveries of childhood.

**Miss Bindergarten Gets Ready For Kindergarten** – by Joseph Slate

The whimsical Miss Bindergarten prepares her classroom for her students with an explosion of color--a bouquet of fall leaves, a goldfish, rolled-up posters, and shoeboxes full of delightful surprises.

**It Happens to Everyone** – by Bernice Myers

It's the first day of school, and Michael's not the only one having trouble. Mrs. Daniel can't decide what to wear either, and like Michael, she can't find things. When they arrive at school, both are nervous and hope they will be liked. The final pages show them entering the same classroom, for Mrs. Daniel is Michael's teacher.

**Source:** Created by Leslie Barban, Richland County Public Library and SC First Steps

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*South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness ('First Steps') is a comprehensive, results-oriented statewide education initiative to help prepare children to reach school healthy and ready to succeed. Public and private support are combined through county partnerships to enable individual communities to address the unmet needs of young children and their families. First Steps' Countdown to Kindergarten is designed to leverage local resources to aid successful transitions of SC's most at-risk children into kindergarten, and to target early parent involvement and increased community awareness of the importance of school readiness. Nearly 1,300 children and their families will participate in this year's Countdown program. Over 120 certified kindergarten teachers in 34 counties are currently conducting a series of eight visits to each participating family's home to prepare the child for starting school and open the relationship with the child's family.*